

SCOTT FITZHUGH BRIDGE(Paris Landing)
Spanning the Tennessee River at State Highway 76
Paris
Henry County
Tennessee

HAER No. TN-39

HAER
TENN
40-PARIS,
3-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

National Park Service
Southeast Region
Department of the Interior
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

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LOCATION: State Highway 76 spanning Tennessee River on the Henry-Stewart County Line, east of Paris Landing State Park

U.S.G.S. 7.5 minute Paris Landing (19NE), Tennessee, quadrangle, Universal Transverse Mercator coordinates: 16.404370. 4035420; 16,405810.4035760

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: 1927-29 (altered 1940s)

DESIGNED BY: Tennessee State Department of Highways and Public Works

PRESENT OWNER: Tennessee Department of Transportation
Suite 700 James K. Polk Building
505 Deaderick Street
Nashville, Tennessee 37219

PRESENT USE: Vehicular bridge
To be delmolished 1989

SIGNIFICANCE: The Paris Landing Bridge is significant as a representative example of the Pratt and Parker through truss types as well as for its historical associations with the State highway system and toll bridge program in the late 1920s.

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DATE: February 1987

SCOTT FITZHUGH BRIDGE (Paris Landing)

HAER No. TN-39

Page 2

The Paris Landing Bridge, technically designated as the Scott Fitzhugh Bridge, is located on State Route 76 over the Tennessee River (Kentucky Lake) on the county line between Henry and Stewart Counties. The bridge is owned by the State of Tennessee and is located at the entrance to Paris Landing State Park. State Route 76 is a major thoroughfare connecting Middle and West Tennessee. Up to the early twentieth century, few bridges were built in West Tennessee over the Tennessee River which was a major barrier running north and south thus separating West and Middle Tennessee. However, in the 1920s the State Highway Department erected four bridges in West Tennessee across the river. Today these four crossings plus two others are the only bridges spanning the Tennessee River in West Tennessee. Thus each serves as a major transportation corridor.

In 1915 the State Legislature created the Tennessee State Highway Department which was reorganized in 1919 with the directive to develop a state highway system. This resulted in a State-wide program to designate roads connecting county seats as state routes. In 1925 the State assumed control over these roads and authorized five million dollars for bridge and road work on these routes. Thus a major state-wide road and bridge building effort by the State Highway Department ensued. It was at this time that standardized plans for bridges built by the State came into use. In an effort to further expand the funding base for this program, the State also authorized in 1927 and 1929 the construction of twenty-one special toll bridges to span major waterways. State employees lived in toll houses near the bridges to collect the toll fees. Of the sixteen toll bridges built, four were in West Tennessee across the Tennessee River at Paris Landing, New Johnsonville, Perryville, and Savannah. These were somewhat equidistantly spread from north to south providing ready access over the Tennessee River for the entire region. The effectiveness of these locations can be seen in the fact that today these four crossings plus a bridge across the 1963 Pickwick Dam and a 1960s bridge on Interstate 40 are the only vehicular bridge crossings across the Tennessee River in West Tennessee. Within the past decade the truss bridges at New Johnsonville, Perryville, and Savannah have been replaced with modern structures.

The toll bridge system proved to be financially ineffective as the tolls did not generate the anticipated revenue. In 1939 the Legislature freed eight bridges, including the Paris Landing Bridge, that had not for the past three fiscal years yielded gross revenue from tolls of an amount sufficient to defray the salaries of the toll-keepers and pay two percent of the original cost of each bridge as a maintenance fund; the remaining bridges were freed in 1947. Once freed the houses that the toll keepers lived in were sold and usually relocated to another site. It is unknown what happened to the toll house at this bridge.

SCOTT FITZHUGH BRIDGE (Paris Landing)

HAER No. TN-39

Page 3

In the late 1940s, the Tennessee Valley Authority build a dam on the Tennessee River in southern Kentucky known as Kentucky Dam. Since the dam caused the water levels to increase, the Tennessee Valley Authority raised, relocated, or provided protective measures for several bridges, twenty-four sections of highways, and two major bridges at Paris Landing and New Johnsonville. About 1948 the substructure of the Paris Landing Bridge was vertically extended to increase the height of the bridge. On several occasions the piers have been repaired after being struck by barges.

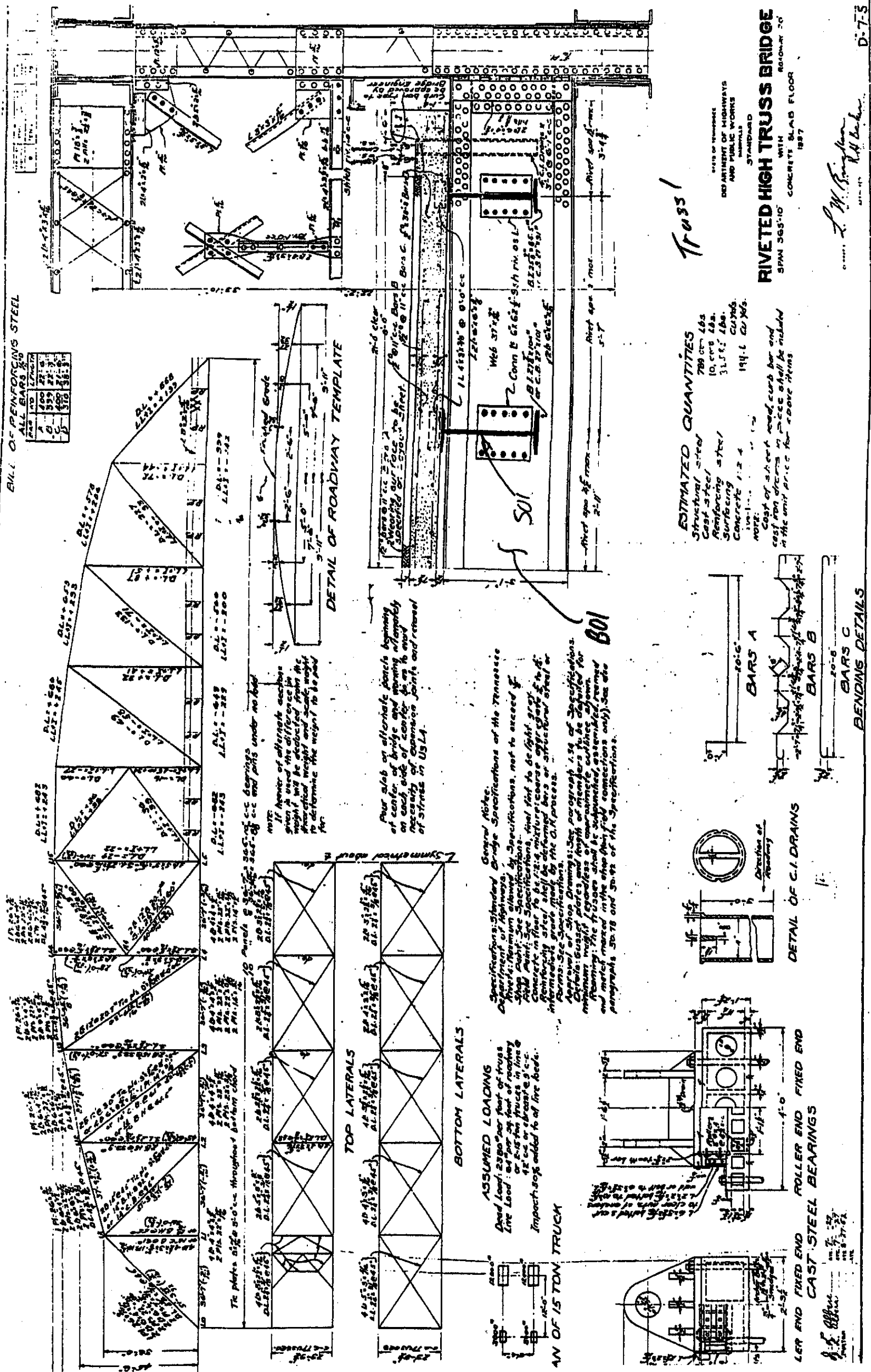
In 1927 the State Legislature authorized \$1,029,390.66 to build this bridge at the mouth of the Sandy River near Fort Henry. Officially designated the Scott Fitzhugh Bridge, it is commonly known as the Paris Landing Bridge since it is located at the entrance to the Paris Landing State Park.

Designed and erected by the Tennessee Department of Highways and Public Works, the bridge is 4,734 feet in length and has a 20-foot roadway. Resting on a concrete substructure, it is composed of eight spans, eleven riveted through (high) steel trusses and sixty-nine (69) concrete deck girder spans. There are eight Pratt trusses at 120 feet each, two Parker through trusses at 320 feet each, and one Parker through truss which is 365 feet in length. (See the drawing.) Unusually large in scale, the bridge contains more truss spans than any other bridge in the State.

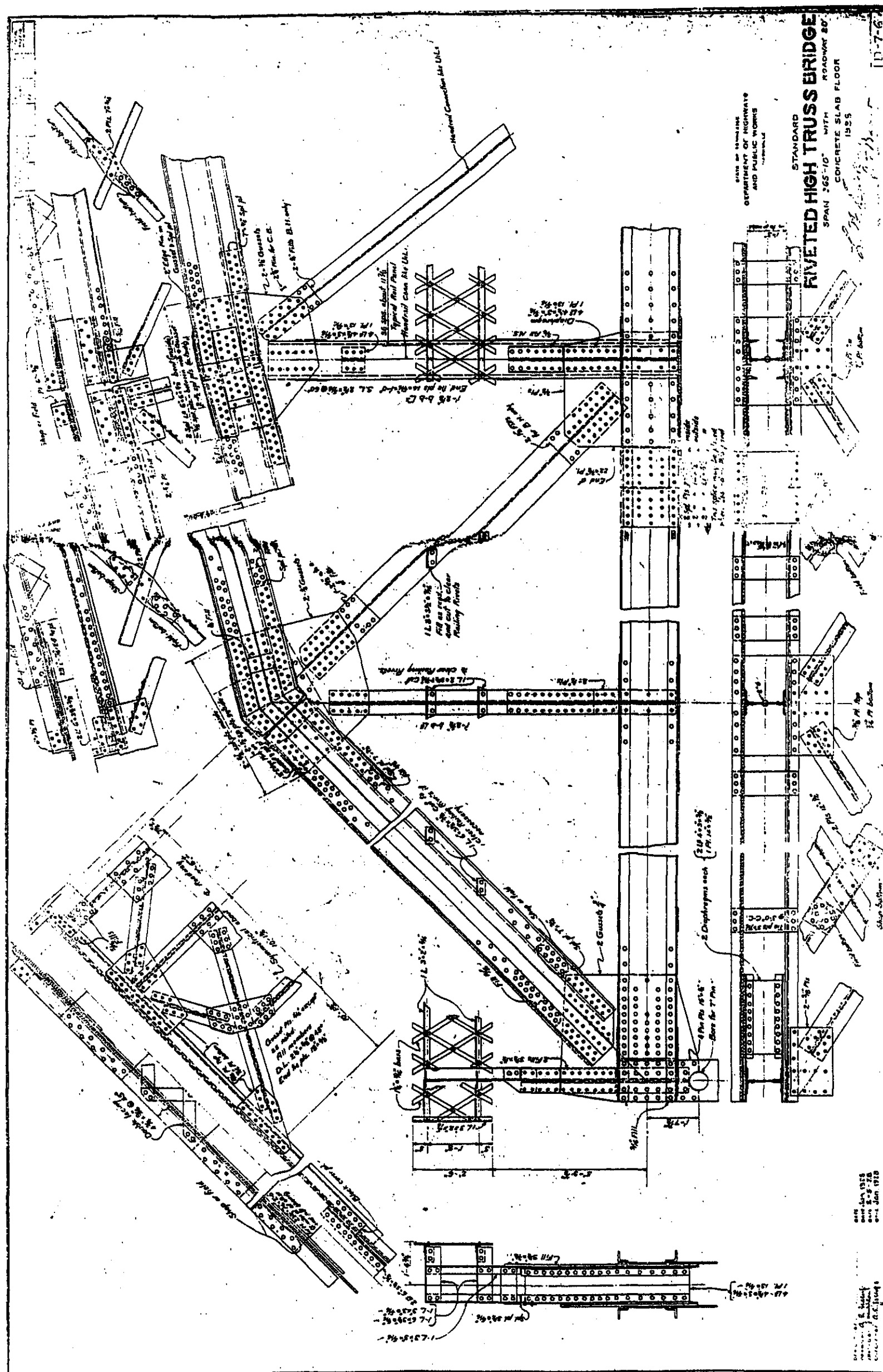
The bridge contains a concrete spindle railing on the approach spans and a metal lattice rail on the trusses. This is typical of State bridges built during this period. Composition of the members is also typical of the State bridges during this time. The top chords and end posts are channels with lacing. The bottom chords are small channels with battens. On the Pratts the diagonals are small channels except in the center panel where the diagonals and counters are angles with battens. On the Parkers the verticals are paired angles with lacing or small channels. The diagonals are paired angles with battens or small channels. In the two center panels of the Parkers a diamond is formed by compression members of small channels with lacing.

The Paris Landing Bridge derives its significance from its representative nature as an example of the Pratt and Parker truss types as well as from its historical association with the development of the State highway system and the State toll bridge program.

Page 4



Page 5



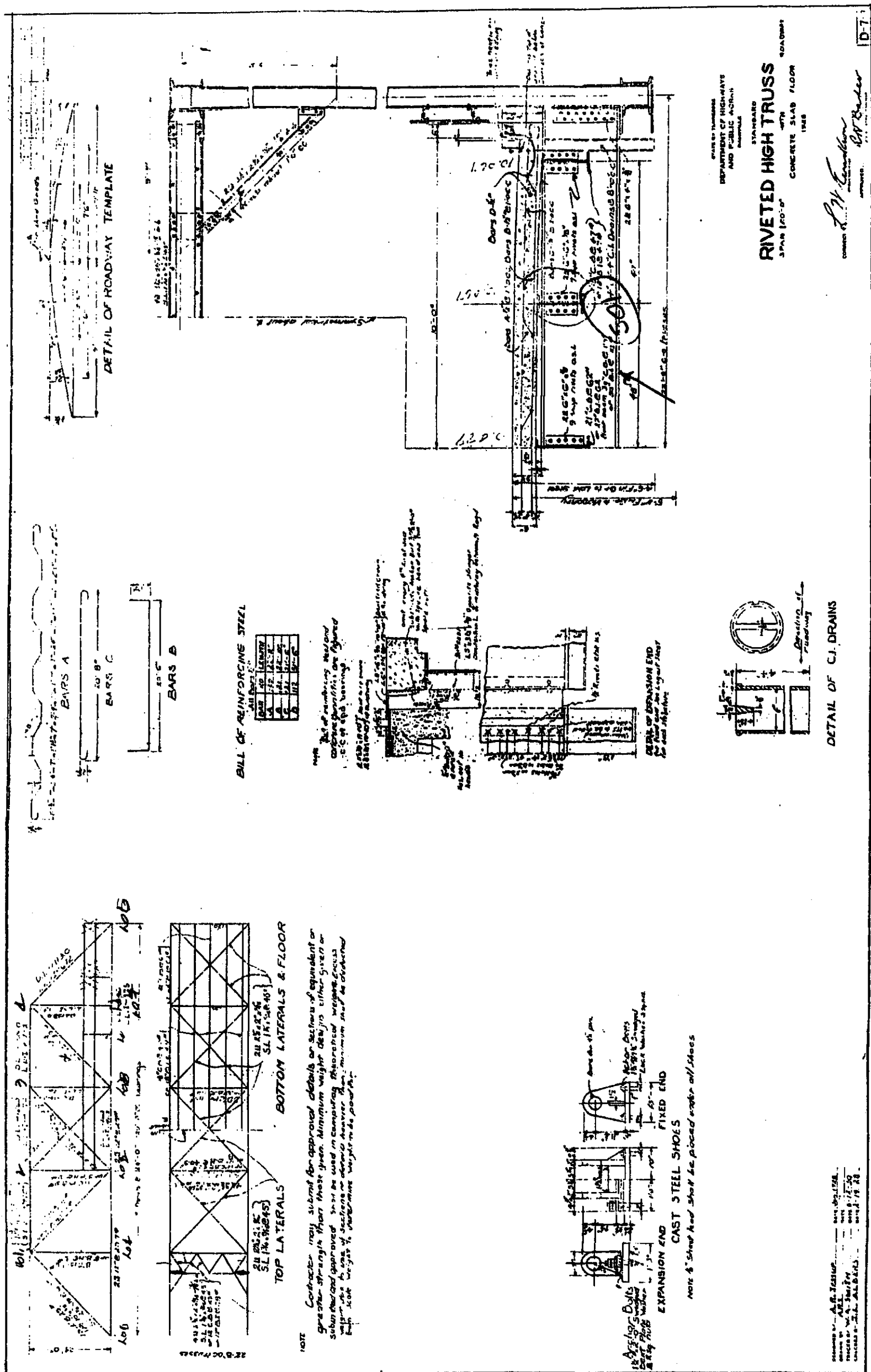
Page 6



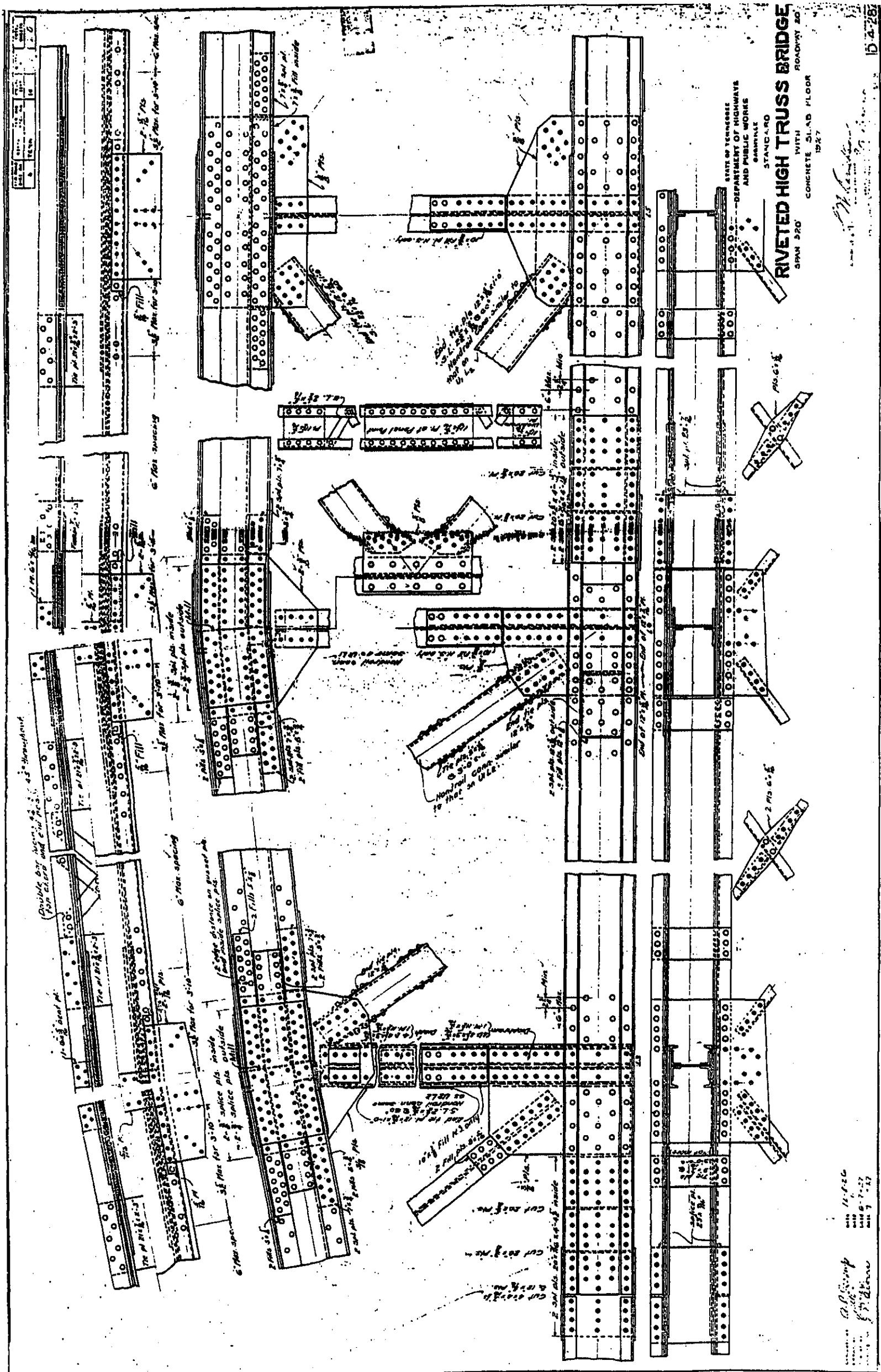
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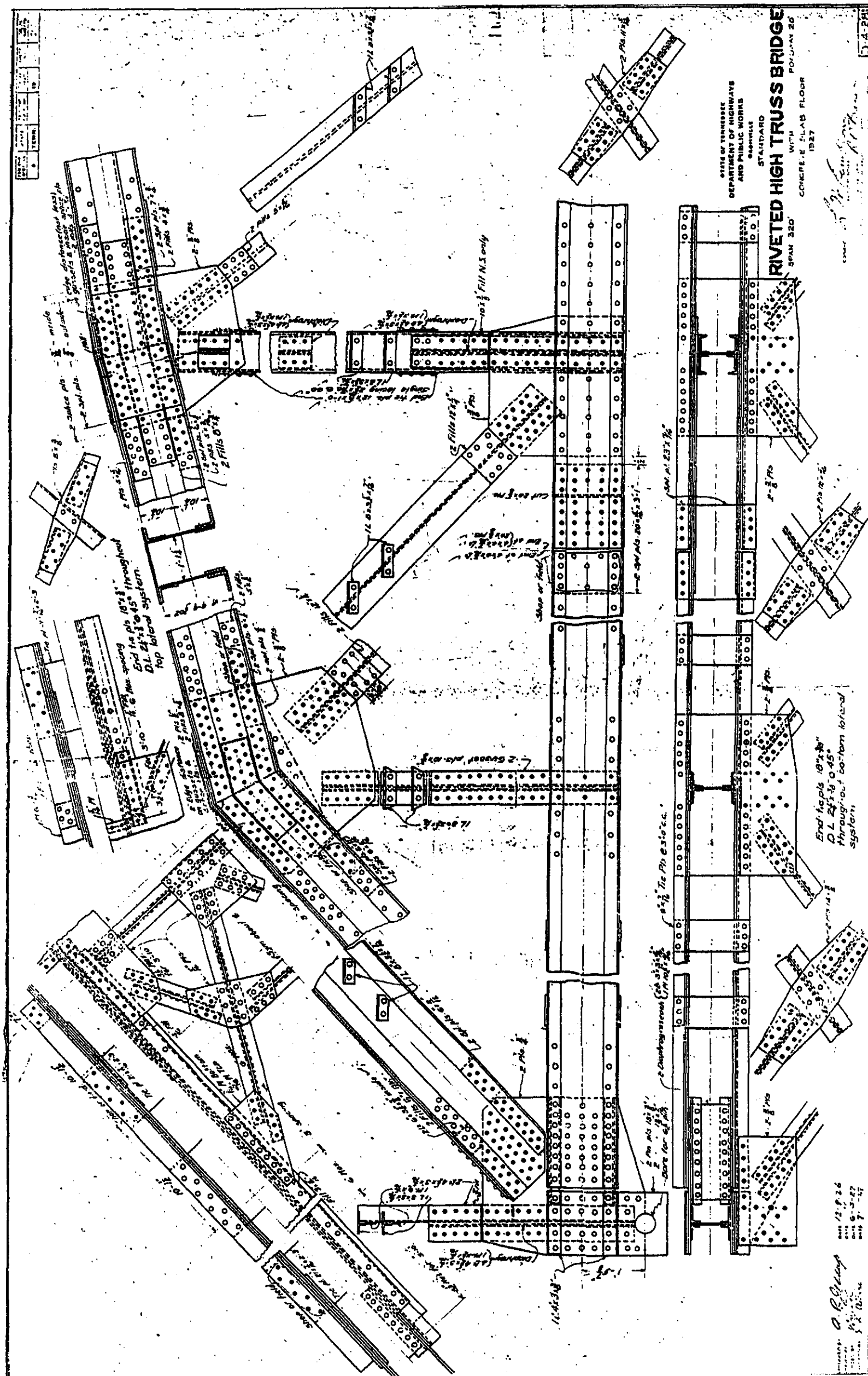
Page 7



Page 8



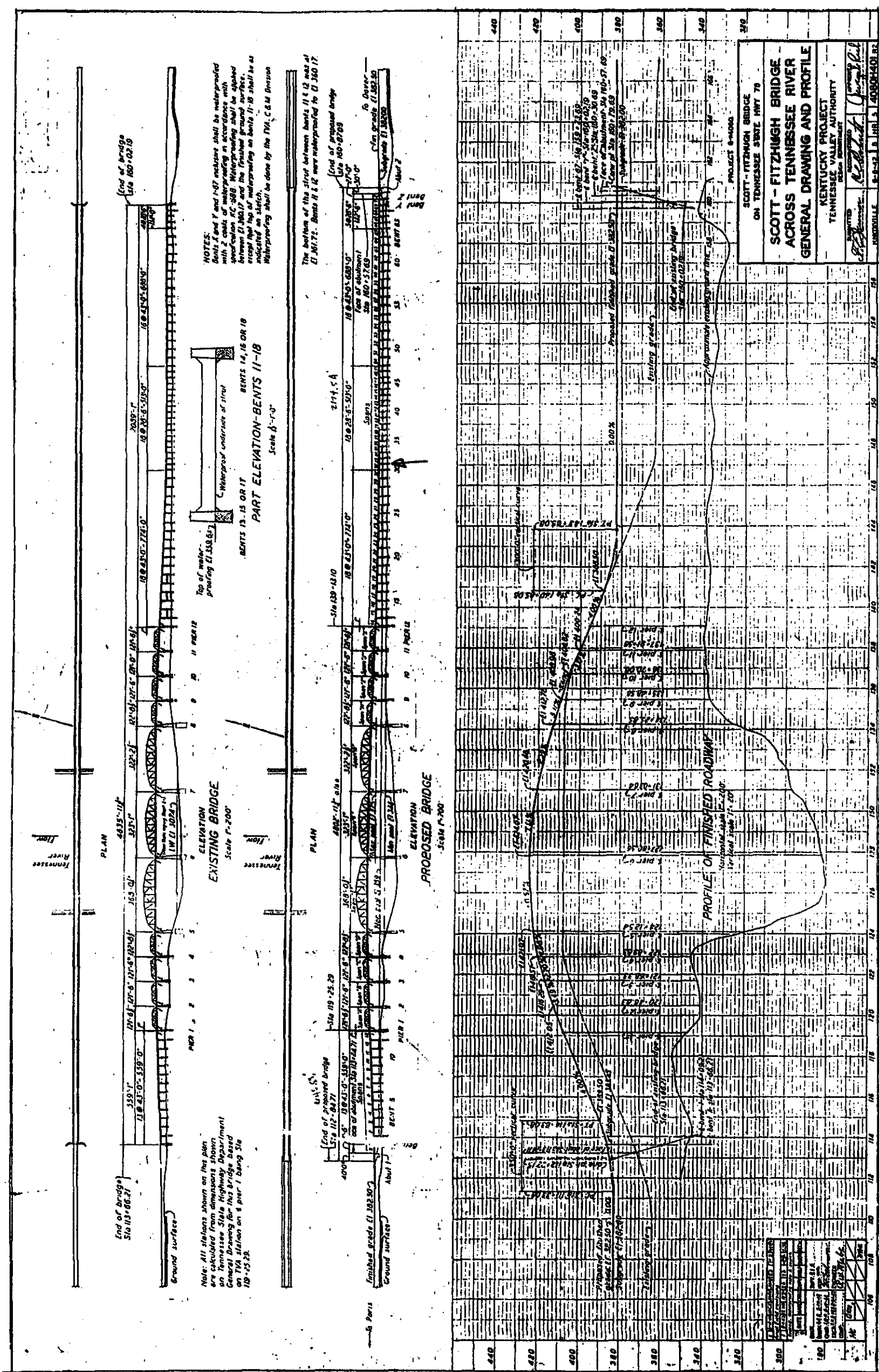
Page 9



Page 10



Page 11



Page 12



Page 13

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Page 14



Page 15

